CHAPTER — II

FORMATION OF THE AGRAHĀRAS

Meaning of the term Agrahāra:

Agrahāra is an old and familiar term. It refers to a social institution that existed in our country from quite early times. In literature as well as in hundreds of inscriptions of both North and South India, dating from very early days, we find the Agrahāras mentioned. We propose to make a historical study of this with a reference to this institution in Karnataka in its various aspects.

To-day, the term Agrahāra is applied generally to a locality of brahmanas in a town or a village. Formerly, not only localities but towns and villages also were called Agrahāras. From the study of the inscriptions it has been revealed that these Agrahāras were villages gifted to the learned brahmanas, for their maintenance. This is the most familiar meaning attached to this term in the modern times. But its real origin and meaning are not clear. Hence, it becomes necessary to examine the connotation and the full significance of the term Agrahāra.
It is indeed difficult to arrive at the exact meaning of the term Agrahāra. In regard to the origin of the term Agrahāra, various views have been held by scholars who have offered their own suggestions. We propose to examine them here. Before we do so, we have to take into consideration the basic character of an Agrahāra. From a study of large number of inscriptions of the early and mediaeval period it becomes clear that the Agrahāras were primarily educational institutions and that they were granted for the maintenance of learned brāhmaṇas who were engaged in the pursuit of promoting traditional learning and imparting education in various subjects.

Agrahāra is a composite word consisting of two terms Agrā and hāra or Ahāra. But the exact import of either of the component words are not clear. Regarding the origin and interpretation of the term Agrahāra, its first part being Agrā, which means first or foremost, all the scholars who have discussed this question agree with this term was applied in the present context to these brāhmaṇas who according to Vedic traditions were the first among the four conventional Varnas or Classes of society. So leaving aside this part of the expression we take up the second part about which there is a great diversity of opinions. The second part has been taken
by some as āhāra or āhāra. This word again has been interpreted differently. For instance, some have derived it from the Sanskrit word hri, meaning to take away. Others have taken it as āhāra which occurs in the sense of a territory or a land unit. Āhāra also means food, maintenance, etc. So with this preliminary consideration we will scrutinize the arguments of a few noted writers. D.L.Narasimhachar, for instance, takes the term āhāra to mean a territorial division. J.C.Ghosh, on the other hand, derives this word Agrahāra from Agra i.e. first or prior and hri to take, and states that the term would mean 'One who takes or collects king's share,' taking agrā in the sense of agrā-bhāga, i.e., king's share. Therefore, the term Agrahāra would mean according to him, a place of business or headquarters of the Agrahāra or the Agrahārin. Thus Agrahārin has been interpreted to mean an officer like Mahattama of the later times. 

H.G.Majumdar, who first edited these plates stated that an officer made this proclamation from Ambila which was an Agrahāra, i.e., a royal-grant village or in other words, a village granted by the king. This interpretation was objected to by Ghosh on the ground that a grant could not be issued from a royal grant village. But there is no basis for such an objection,
for Ambila was after all a village granted by the king and either he himself or his officers could at any time camp there, as in other places and make proclamations of other grants. There are numerous instances of this type.

Another scholar, Appadorai, connects this term with the collection of taxes, when he suggests that the term Agrahāra is derived from agre-harati. According to him, a village was known as an Agrahāra because the revenue of that village was alienated to (harati) certain persons for whom it was granted, before (agra) it could reach the royal treasury. That is to say, that the king or the government did not get any revenue from such villages. This suggestion is based on the assumption that Agrahāras were rent-free villages. But, this interpretation is not accurate. It is true that most of the Agrahāras were generally made rent-free or tax-free; yet, there were also some others which had to pay fixed amount of taxes. Such Agrahāras were called Niyatakara Agrahāras. Hence it would be incorrect to generalise and say that the revenue from the Agrahāras were appropriated before it reached the king and therefore they were called Agrahāras.

It may be noted that the term ahāra occurs in
many inscriptions in the sense of a territorial division, like Vishaya, Nādu, Mandala etc. But, even here, there is difference of opinion with regard to its derivation. Dr. Sircar thinks that a division was known as āhāra because it fetched revenue. The term āharani, as occurring in the Brahmodra - Mohota inscription of Drōṇasimha, and āhāra are both taken to have been derived from ā + hri, both being centres of collection of revenue. J. Ph. Vogel, on the other hand, cites Prof. Kern, according to whom the term āhāra is equivalent to adhara meaning ground. "It seems to mean 'territory' in the compound sāhāra." However, it is to be noted that in both these cases, the term āhāra stands for a territorial unit. Āhāra also is found to have been used in the same sense.

As noted earlier the first part of this compound word i.e. āgra means foremost, first, chief and so on. The term Agrahāra may therefore be taken to mean a land unit belonging to the foremost i.e., the brāhmaṇas. A study of the inscriptions shows that these Agrahāras were generally donated to the brāhmaṇas, who by their learning, scholarship and austerity, had acquired a place of honour and stood at the top of the social hierarchy. These were āgraś or
the foremost. From this it can be said that agras mean brāhmaṇas. The word āhāra or hāra as seen above means a division or a unit of land. It may also be taken in a modified sense to mean a village or town.

Kittel\(^8\) has taken the word āhāra to mean food or livelihood. Hence, the term Agrahara may also be interpreted as land or a village granted for food, that is to say, for the maintenance of the agras i.e., the foremost among the four classes viz., the brāhmaṇas.

Other interpretations suggested by several other scholars also may be briefly noticed here. Dr. Moraes, for instance, says that it constituted the real universities of Mediaeval India the "stadium generale or the school of universal learning."\(^9\) Another view is that it was a grant of land given to the brāhmaṇas for religious purposes.\(^10\) According to yet another view, it was a grant made for the benefit of the religious students.\(^11\) Dr. R. K. Mookerji thinks that Agrahāras were "the villages consecrated for the use of religious students (brāhmaṇas)."\(^12\) This interpretation is only partly correct since the students were maintained in the Agrahāras, but it may be observed here that the grants were made for the maintenance of learned teachers also. Altekar is of the opinion that the Agrahāras were "a settlement of brāhmaṇa colonies in villages, exclusively assigned to them for their maintenance."\(^13\)
Dr. Meenakshi also holds a similar opinion. According to her "when a whole village was settled by a number of learned brahmanas, it was commonly known as an 'agrahāra'." Fleet thought that the Agrahāra was like an Inam village of later periods. These various interpretations mentioned above are not comprehensive, because, though it is true that they were the villages granted to the brahmanas, they were not exclusively brahmana villages. As will be seen below, people following different professions also lived in such villages. Thus a more plausible explanation of the term Agrahāra would be that it was a village granted to a group of brahmanas settled there for the purpose of conducting religious and educational activities. The land in such a village belonged to the brahmaṇa donees. But other people also pursuing different professions did live here.

Antiquity and evolution of the Agrahāra:

It is difficult to say when exactly the system of creating or establishing the Agrahāra was commenced. It is well-known that in the Vedic period educational activities were conducted in the hermitages of the sages in the forests situated far away from the cities. The kings used to donate money and cows to such sages. Students stayed with the sages. This system was known
as Gurukula system. In these Gurukulas they studied different subjects. In course of time, with the growth of civilization, the educational institutions came to be established in the capital cities and towns also. Yet, the residential nature of such educational institutions was not affected.

The Agraharas of mediaeval days may generally be compared to the Gurukulas of ancient days although there were fundamental differences between the two. Like the Gurukulas, the Agraharas were residential educational institutions. Unlike the Gurukulas each of which was headed by one sage, the Agraharas were managed by groups of people called Mahājanas. Though the Agraharas were the grant villages of the brāhmaṇas, people of other communities also lived there. But it was not so in the case of Gurukulas. Gurukula was not a village, but only an ashrama of an individual. In the Agraharas there used to be various teachers learned in different branches of knowledge and each taught the subject in which he was proficient. Though there were dissimilarities, they can be treated on the same level to a certain extent. For, the Vedic traditional learning was common and the students were under the direct control of the teachers. Like the Agraharas they were also maintained by royal...
grants. It is therefore proper to think that the Agrahāras evolved from the earlier Gurukulas. With the change of times the Gurukulas of the forests made way for educational institutions founded in cities and towns. But the residential character of the Gurukula was not lost. Thus we find that the whole villages were converted into educational institutions and called Agrahāras. Thus the nucleus of the Agrahāra can be traced to the Gurukula of the yore.

The institution of Agrahāra has a great antiquity. Kalhana in his Rājatarangini refers to some ancient kings of Kashmir like Kusa, Janaka, Sačinara and others who established the Agrahāras. Kusa, of the Lava family is said to have made a grant of an Agrahāra Kuruhāra. His son Khagendra established two important Agrahāras of Kashmir viz., Khāgi and Khonamaśa. Godhara of a scion of another family is credited with the grant of Godhara Hastisālā Agrahāra to the brāhmaṇas. Janaka, grand-son of Godhara, founded a vihāra and an Agrahāra called Jālora. Sačinara, the successor of Janaka is credited with the creation of two Agrahāras viz., Śamangāsa and Śanāra. In Rājatarangini, these kings are placed prior to the Maurya king Asoka indicating that these ruled before him. This pushes back the antiquity of the Agrahāras to a period much earlier than that
of Aśoka. However, it should be noted that the chronology of these rulers is still subject to doubt.\(^{16}\)

With the rise of the Gupta power, the brāhmaṇical studies gained prominence and the Gupta kings encouraged and patronised learned brāhmaṇas by making handsome grants. Samudragupta for instance, is said to have made from his camp Ānandāpura, a grant of two villages (as an Agrahāra) to a brāhmaṇa named Jayabhaṭṭi, who is described as Traśaṇīḍha.\(^{17}\) This shows that this institution of Agrahāra was already in existence by this time.

It is reasonable to surmise that in Karnataka also, almost in the same period as of the Guptas, such institutions came into existence. Inscriptions however, take us back to fourth century A.D. For example, Taṅgarte in Shikarpur taluk of Shimoga district appears to be a very ancient Agrahāra. The record that refers to this Agrahāra is dated in chronograms corresponding to 357 A.D.\(^{18}\) But the genuineness of this record is questionable. Similar is the case with Gauja, also in Shimoga district which finds its mention in a record belonging to 444 A.D.\(^{19}\) The genuineness of this record also is not beyond doubt. Taḷagunda, the original home town of the early Kadambas who came to power in the
middle of the fourth century A.D. appears to have been an ancient Agrahāra. Mayūraśarma, the founder of this dynasty, was a brahmana who received instructions and became learned under his teacher Viraśarma, both of whom later on went to Kanchi for higher studies. Records of the later Kadambas state that Mayūraśarma brought a number of learned Brāhmaṇas from Ahichchhatra to settle at Taḷaṅgūnda. This episode indicates that Taḷaṅgūnda which was not an Agrahāra earlier, was made so by Mayūraśarma. Thus the antiquity of the Agrahāra in Karnataka dates back, at least, to the 4th century A.D. In subsequent days this practice of instituting the Agrahāra became more popular.

Thus we can trace the existence of this institution of Agrahāra in the Gupta period. In Karnataka also the system of forming the Agrahāra began during the reign period of the Kadambas who were the contemporaries of the Guptas. The Agrahāras were not too many at that time. The later rulers viz., the Rashtrakūtas, the Chālukyas, Hoysalas and the Seunas gave great encouragement for the spread of education and hence innumerable Agrahāras came into existence during their regimes from the 6th century onwards.
Formation of the Agrahāras:

We shall now discuss the question as to how the Agrahāras came to be created. As seen earlier, the Agrahāras were villages granted to the brāhmaṇas. But it is interesting to note, particularly in the early period, that not all the villages so granted to the brāhmaṇas were specifically called Agrahāras. There are instances to show that grants of villages have been made to brāhmaṇas but without specifically using the term Agrahāra. But even in such cases it is obvious that the purpose of such grants was to promote the cause of education and learning. The institution of Agrahāra with all its significance, attained at a later period, was not yet fully evolved in the early period and hence the villages thus granted were not specifically mentioned as Agrahāras.

In inscriptions we come across the expressions like Agrahārikṛtya, which means 'having converted (a village) into an Agrahāra.' This shows that the villages that existed previously as ordinary villages were converted as Agrahāras for the purpose of education. A few instances of such ordinary villages being converted into an agrahāra cited below illustrate this point. In an inscription of Viraballāla it is said that the village
Navile in Wirgunda-nāḍu was made an Agrahāra, and was granted to 160 brahmanas by Kusugal and others of the place. The record is from Naule in Channarayapattana taluk of Hassan district and it is dated 1158 A.D. It is noted in a record dated 1163 A.D. from Hulleyakere in Arasikere taluk of Hassan district, that one Buchirāja described as Sarvādhikāra and heggade, made a grant of the village Hulleyakere in Nirgunada nāḍu as an Agrahāra to the brāhmaṇas, who were learned in the Vēdas after obtaining it from the king Narasimha of the Hoysala dynasty. The information that the village Molēśvara was made an Agrahāra by Hoysala Viraballāla II, is obtained from an inscription from Tarikere dated 1185 A.D. Kembāla village was made an Agrahāra by Vishvanātha at the instance of the Hoysala king Narasimha II. Agrahāra Sōmanathapura i.e. the present Nuggihalli in Channarayapattana taluk of Hassan district was created by Bommanna Daṇḍanayaka, an officer under the Hoysala king Sōmeśvara. It is known from another inscription that 1291 A.D. of Viraballāla II that the village Banāvūr was granted as an Agrahāra by the king to Kaluva-sāyana, who named it Sarvajñalakshmipura and divided it into 82 shares and distributed between the brāhmaṇas and for the worship of the deities. It is the present Banuru Agrahāra in Kadur district.
The above cited instances have reference to single village, which were granted as Agrahāras. But, there are instances where more than one village were granted as an Agrahāra and in such cases, two or more villages were clubbed together to form one Agrahāra. The reason for such grouping seems to be that a single village was not sufficient to meet the requirements of educational institution, which was intended to be installed. This might have necessitated the inclusion of one or more villages to form one Agrahāra. To state a few examples of this kind — A Rashtrakūṭa record of Nityavarsha dated 968 A.D. from Kyāsapura in Chitradurga district, refers to the formation of an Agrahāra after clubbing the two villages viz, Bidiravalli and Bīravūr by an officer named Pandayya.27 Sāvasi and Gudigere villages have been mentioned as one Agrahāra in an inscription dated 997 A.D. found at Tāḷagunda in Shikarpur taluk of Shimoga district.28 We also find reference to this in the 'three inscriptions in Dharwar,' edited by Dr. Fleet.29 It is noted in an inscription dated 1204 A.D. that the villages Huggilūr and Hoṇnūr in the unit of Sōge-12 of the district of Kōgali-500 were granted as an Agrahāra by the king Hoysala Viraballāla to the Mahājana of the Mahāgrāma Pushpaṭalikā i.e., the present Hüvinahadagali in Harapanahalli taluk of Bellary
Hoysala Narasimha is said to have granted an Agrahāra to the great minister Gōpāla dannāyaka, after clubbing the two villages Setṭigere and Hosagere in Āsandināḍ. The record is dated 1261 A.D. and it hails from Setṭikere in Chikkanayakanahalli taluk of Tumkur district. Another record dated 1295 A.D. from Ālūr in Chamarajnagar taluk belonging to Vīraballāḷadeva III refers to two villages viz., Homma and Ālūr in the district of Hādināḍ in the division of Torenāḍ which were formed into an Agrahāra and named as Arasu-gāndā-Rāma-chaturvēdimangala by Arasu-gāndā-Rāma.

It will be interesting to note in this connection that in the Tamil country also this practice was prevalent. For example, it is found in an inscription from Tirunelvēli in the same district that the king Parāntakan Vīramārāyanan clubbed two villages, Tirumahagalam and Sōmāśikurichachi into one and granted it to several learned brahmanas of Tirumangalam at the instance of one Nārāyana-Kēśavan.

This method of clubbing two villages into one and granting it as an Agrahara was prevalent in India from very early times. The granting of two villages as Agraharas by king Samudragupta of the Imperial Gupta family has already been noted at the outset.
We have further epigraphical evidences which go to indicate that at times even more than two villages were granted so as to form one Agrahāra. An inscription from Belagāmi in Shikarpur taluk which is dated 1118 A.D. states that one Virasomabhūpati, who was governing Banavasi province and other tracts, made an Agrahāra after converting three villages viz., Sēnavalli, Kakachāvī-Mēvinahalli and Ittipalli in Hannihalli-kampaṇa, into one Agrahāra and granted it to 67 brāhmaṇas of various gotras, with all rights and were free from all imposts, to make his own birth fruitful.35 According to an inscription dated 1162 A.D. found at Dharmāpura in Bilkere Hobli, in Hunsur taluk of Mysore district, the three hamlets, i.e., Āridavalkē, Būvanahalli and Torakavādi were formed into one Agrahāra and named as Dharmāpura by a Hoysala general named Siṭṭiyamāna.36

Still further instances are there to show that a similar practice was prevalent even in the regions outside Karnataka. Here we can cite an example from Tamil country. A Pallava record of Vijaya Nandīvarma refers to an Agrahāra formed by converting four villages into one Agrahāra by the king who named it Nayadhira-mangalam after his title and granted it to 108 brāhmaṇas of various gōtras and sūtras.37
This practice continued even in later periods in Karnataka. Ramachandra of the Sëuna dynasty made over four villages in Kanhaíri Kampanaka to Mahâmançâlîka Purushottama alias Purushai Nâyaka of the Vásîtha gotra. The donee then converted them into an Agrahâra and divided the gift to 60 brâhmaëas on the day of Kapila-ghasthi in Bhâdrapada of saka 1232 i.e. 1310 A.D. An interesting example is found in an inscription of the Vijayanagara period. According to it, the Gadag-dêsa or the Gadag region (in Dharwar district) was divided into three divisions, out of which, two were kept as king's share and for the worship of gods Trayâmbakôśa and Viranârayana. The third division was converted into an Agrahâra and was given to a scholar named Sammanâchârya, the accountant of Gadag-dêsa and to others who belonged to various gotras and sûtras. This copper plate record is dated 1379 A.D. But this method was not commonly prevalent in the earlier period.

It may be noted that after the creation of an Agrahâra, the boundaries of the Agrahâra were properly defined according to the specific procedure laid down by the rules prevalent at that time. This was necessary in the interest of the grantees who enjoyed the property and also others, so that there would not be any encroachment.
Boundaries with specific details were mentioned in the record. (There are many instances in which the description of the boundaries in minutest details are mentioned.) For example Nilgundaplate of Vikramaditya VI may be noted in this connection. It refers to a grant of the villages by the king to 500 Mahājanas of the place. The boundaries of the village as enumerated in the record runs as follows:

"It extended as far as the Elephants Rock (gajapāśāna) on the East to the South of which was the Khalvāṭa-hill. On the South East, it extended up to the two villages Talevāgya and Kamaṇḍalukārāpāsa, with a stream each, running at a spot nearly West of both the villages. To the South it extended up to the stream at a spot nearly North of the village named Tilaka. On the South West there was the rock and to the North of which i.e., on the East of the village named Lākṣāgeha, was the Baffelo's Rock (Mahiṣa pāśāna). Its extension towards the West was limited up to the pool of the Madhukānta tree, to the North West of which was the Āyasaśāra tamarind tree. Dirgha-tunga hill marked a limit into North Western expansion. On the North of this village was the ant hill of the golden Acacia (Svarna-khadira). To the North East, it extended as far as the Akṣhara rock."
An inscription of Hoysala Viraballaladeva II from Tarikere dated 1185 A.D. may be cited as an example here. The inscription gives the following details:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ā-ūra sima-sambandhav-entendade mūdana sime} \\
\text{jīyara kereya kelage nattā kallu kattida kola} \\
\text{āgṇēyadalu] machohera kāla modalalu nattā kallu} \\
\text{tenkalu Hagareya halla] nai[ri] rityadalum} \\
\text{Hāduvalūmīgijeyā halla] Vāyuvyadalu sanchari-} \\
\text{valla atiyamara badagalu avalegallu odagere-} \\
\text{yolagana-muggudeya kallu] Īśānyadalu Hulīgīla} \\
\text{hallādim kūditu-sime} \ldots \ldots \ldots 41
\end{align*}
\]

Some times new villages were brought into existence so as to settle the learned brahmanas, and these were then granted as Agrahāras. An example of this type of Agrahāra may be noted here. A record dated 1186 A.D. from Vīradēvanahalli in Arsikere taluk speaks of Vīrayyaḍānanayaka a minister described as 'Śrīman-

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mahāpradhāna Sarvāḥikāri Śrīkaraṇ-āgraganva Sarvādha-} \\
\text{yaksha}', who is said to have established a new township} \\
\text{called Vīra-ballalapura after clearing the woods. 42} \\
\text{Further, it states that for the prosperity of the kingdom} \\
\text{of his lord Vīra-ballāla, he constructed tanks named} \\
\text{Rudrasamudra, G-angasamudra, Vīrasamudra and Achyuta-} \\
\text{samudra and fixed a revenue of four gadyānas for that}
\]
town and presented that town as an Agrahāra, free from all imposts to 32 brahmanas. Further, the record also refers to his building a stone temple there and installing the deities Viranārayana and Achyutesvara. Another interesting point to be noted in this connection is that the officer made grant of land to be rent-free for 12 years etc. to those who cut down the forest for the establishment of the town. But, this type of grants are rare. From another record dated 1253 A.D. from Channarayapattana in Arsikere taluk we find information about a General named Brahma, who created the Agrahāra Somanāthapura which is the modern Huggiyahalli in the same taluk. To quote the passage here:

"Lakshmyā yas-saha bhūri-saurabhya-yāsāḥ prōddāma-
Dāmodara-Kṣirah-kṣirādhi-parījata-viṭapī
Srivatsa-gotrōdbhaveḥ ārimad-Brahma-varūthini
patirāsau sarvottamōrvvisuravratottsāmīta-
Somanāthanagāri-namagrahāram vyadhāt || 43"

The present famous village Somanāthapura in Mysore district, was an Agrahāra, created by a Hoysala officer named Somanātha-dandanāyaka. The record is dated 1258 A.D. The editor of this record states that this village was a newly built one and there was no village in the place until the officer Somanātha-dandanāyaka built one here. It is disclosed in a record dated 1189 A.D. from Bommanahalli
in Arsikere Taluk that an officer named Madhuha, built an Agrahara Madhusudhanapura.  

Sometimes existing Agraharas were regranted as a gift to a number of donees. It is known from an inscription dated 1146 A.D. of Jagadekamalla II from Amminabhavi in Dharwar district that the Agrahara Amminabhavi was restored to the god Mulasthana by a Mahapradhana Bammayyayaka. In another instance we find the Agrahara being regranted for the purpose of rehabilitation. Though this record is of later date it is worth mentioning here. It is dated 1379 A.D. and it belongs to Harihara II of Vijayanagaram dynasty. In this record it is stated that the Agrahara Kukkanur was regranted to Sriman Mahamayasthanadacharya Gandina Bhattappayya, who was in charge of the temple of Mahamaya, for rehabilitation. From this inscription it is known that the Agrahara Kukkanur had gone to ruins. So, it was granted by the king to the above mentioned donee. He also renovated the temple of Mahamaya and other shrines, and arranged for worship, offerings, burning lamps, conduct daily rituals and periodical festivals of the deities and also for the study of the Vedas.

We know from other inscriptions that Kukkanur was a famous Agrahara even in the 11th century and was
under the control of 1000 Mahājanaś. Later it might have 
gone into ruins on account of reasons, unknown to us. 
Same was the case with the Amminabhāvi Agrahāra, referred 
above.

The purpose of instituting the Agrahāras:

Agrahāras were large in number and they flourished 
because people took interest in education and literary and 
religious activities. People were advanced in culture. 
They took interest in poets and understood poetry. As 
the author of Kavirājamārgga puts it, though they were 
not properly educated, they advanced in actual life. That 
is to say, that they had genuine interest in learning 
and education. They could even understand the secrets 
of poetry:

Padanaridu nudiyanum nudi |
dudanaridārayalamarpā nādevargal ||
chadurār nijadim kurito |
dadeyum kavyaprayoga pariṣṭhata matigal ||

The practical aspect of purpose was the promotion of 
learning and cultural life and also providing means 
for the scholars who were engaged in the pursuit of know-
ledge, for a life of contentment free from worldly needs 
and worries. Naturally, they were religious minded. So,
another idea that must have been prominent in their mind was to accrue merit \( (\text{pu\=n\=ya}) \) by giving grants to the religious institutions or to brāhmaṇas who were engaged in educational activities. Consequently, they used to undertake works like installation of free feeding houses and water sheds, construction of tanks and creation of the Agrahāras. Agrahāras as mentioned earlier was primarily and predominantly an educational institution. Its main purpose was the spread of education and furtherance of scholarship. In those days the imparting and the spread of education itself was considered to be a religious act bringing merit to the persons who set up these institutions. Such acts on the one hand benefitted the people, and on the other earned merit for the donor.

We have innumerable instances to show that kings and other dignitaries engaged in such activities with pleasure. We have the example of Asoka, the great Maurya king, who, in the third century B.C., undertook many acts of public welfare not only in his country but even in those of his neighbours. These acts included construction of wells, planting of trees on the road sides, supply of medicinal herbs, and so on. Throughout our history we find many examples of this type. So far as the kings were concerned, such activities of public welfare
were a part of *rajadharma*. They were bound by their traditional duties to look after the welfare of their subjects. By such deeds they were not only acting according to the tenet or *rajadharma*, but were also as individuals earning merit. Among such acts of merit, *dana* or donation for the worship of god, for the feeding of the poor, for the supply of water was considered sacred. Of all such gifts, *vidyadana*, i.e., donation for the spread of knowledge in some way or the other was considered most superior of all the other kinds of gifts.49

We find that a number of kings and queens and even officials and people with means, used to make handsome donations, willingly, for the maintenance of educational institutions and the teachers and students therein providing them with food, shelter, clothing and even medicines. It is this help from the donors that furthered the spread of learning in the early days. Thus earning the merit for oneself as well as for the near and dear ones was one of the motives in establishing the Agrahāras.50

We may note a few examples in this regard. Brahmasamudra Agrahāra was created by the minister Naka,
after obtaining the permission of the king Narasimha of the Hoysala dynasty, to secure fame by the works of merit and granted it to twelve brahmanas of the place.

The subordinate officers of the kings and their servants instituted the Agrahāras for the merit of their masters. A record dated 1169 A.D. of the Hoysala king Virabhādara mentions that the Agrahāra Madhusūdhanapura, was created by the minister Madhūna for the prosperity of the kingdom of his ruler Virabhādara. Grant of the village Kolatūr same as Amritapura as an Agrahāra by a certain Nayaka (whose name cannot be made out in the record) for the long life, health and prosperity of his overlord Virabhādara is mentioned in a Hoysala record dated 1187 A.D., from Channarayapattana taluk of Hassan district.

Like the desire to earn merit, celebration of an event like victory was also an occasion for the formation of an Agrahāra. For example, an Agrahāra named Kotiganūru in Hālapola - 12, a subdivision of Kōgali - 500 was granted to the temple of Kalidēva at Pūvinapadagile by the king Vikramāditya VI. when he obtained victory over one Dandaṇayaka Biddayya. The record is dated 1057 A.D. and it is from Hūvinahadagali in Bellary district.
Sometimes kings made daily grants for a number of days probably with a view to fulfil some vow or the other. This type of grant was known as Nityadāna or Nityabhūmidāna. In order to fulfil this view, an entire village came to be given away as dāna. For example, the king Vikramāditya, who obtained victory over one Daṇḍanāyaka Bidayya mentioned above, is said to have granted many other Agrahāras in order to fulfil his vow to donate land every day (Nityabhūmidāna). Another such village granted by the same king was Hiriyakurihaṭṭi i.e. the present Arekurihatti in Navalgund taluk of Dharwar district, which was granted as Nityadāna. The same king is credited with the creation of the Agrahāra Hiriyabalagaranur for the same reason. The inscription recording this fact is dated 1175 A.D. and it is from Balagarnur in Sindgi taluk of Bijapur district. The actual passage runs thus:

"Tribhuvanamalladevara Nityabhūmidāna
Sarvvanamsya Mahāgrahāram Hiriyabalagaranurä..."

Coronation was also a worthy occasion for meritorious deeds. There are examples of handsome donations made by kings on such occasions. They also created and donated Agrahāras on such auspicious events. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa king Gōvinda III is credited with the creation of 400 Agrahāras during the time of his accession to the throne.
It is known from a Kalacnun inscription of 1161 A.D. that the village Mangoli was granted to one Isvara Ghalisasa, by the Western Ghalukya king Talla II, at the time of his coronation. This record is from Mangoli in Bagewadi taluk of Bijapur district.

At times, the Agraharas were formed by the officials of the king, or private individuals. In the former case, the officials first received a village, probably as a gift from the king, and then converted it into an Agrahara. We find a reference to this type in a Hoysala record of 1209 A.D. Pandita-Dandamatha, a minister of the king Viraballala II created an Agrahara named Mallikarjunapura after obtaining the said village from the king. He is also said to have constructed two temples viz., Kesava and Mallesvara in that village. It is known from a record of Kadambas of Goa that Kamaladevi, queen of Sivachitta-Permmadideva, requested her husband to grant the village Deegavve which she converted into an Agrahara and granted it to a number of brahmanas of various charanas and gotras.

Commemoration of the relatives was also an occasion for the creation of Agraharas. Thus we find that Hoysala Vishnuvardhana converted the village Kellavatti
into an Agrahāra in 1123 A.D. and granted it to the brāhmaṇas in memory of his deceased brother Udayāditya. Those brāhmaṇas have been mentioned as being dependent on the deceased prince. 62

Quite a number of instances of Agrahāras being created and granted to the brāhmaṇas as dakṣinā or offerings on such occasions as the performance of a sacrifice or other religious and charitable deeds are forthcoming. For instance, a record of Tāila II of Chālukya dynasty, dated 973 A.D. informs that the village Modeyanur was granted to the officiating priest Rēvaya-dvēdi chaṭṭōpādhyāya sōmayāji by the king after performing Brahmandakratu. 63 The record is from Madinur in Koppal taluk of Raichur district. Similarly, the Gobbur record of Vikramaditya VI dated 1095 A.D. states that the village Gobbur which is the present Gobbur in Raichur district, was made by the king Aheamalla, to the 200 Mahājanas of that place, as dakṣinā at the time of his performance of Kōti-homa. 64 From a record of Vikramaditya VI, dated 1076 A.D. it is known that the Agrahāra Muttage was granted as dakṣinā by the king to Vishnubhata of that place. 65 It is revealed in a record from Kallūr, i.e. modern Kallur in Manvi taluk of Raichur district that the village Kallūr was granted to a dandanayaka named
Vikramāditya-bhaṭṭopādhyāya Sanyāśkrutusomayāgin, as 
ākṣhina, on performing the Pañchalāṅgalakratu, by the 
king Tribhuvanamalla Vikramāditya VI. The record is 
dated 1096 A.D.

For some reason or the other, when a group of 
brāhmaṇas migrated from one place and desired to settle 
elsewhere, an Agrahāra was created for them. A good 
example of this type is found in the Agrahāra Niṅgūṇā 
situated in Kōgali-500. It was created in 1087 A.D. 
for housing a number of brāhmaṇas who came as immigrants. 
However, it is not known as to why or from where they 
migrated.

Expiation of sin was also a good reason for 
creating Agrahāras. In fact, it was believed that perform­ 
ance of any religious and charitable deed would expiate 
a sinner from his sins. Creation and donation of 
Agrahāras was one such deed. We find instances when 
Agrahāras were created with such motives. For example, 
a king (name is lost) is said to have built on the site 
of every battle field all over the Veṅga country a temple, 
dedicated to Śiva called Narāṇḍrēśvara, set up Agra­ 
haras and also sheds for giving fresh water to thirsty 
way-farers, excavated tanks and granted pleasure gardens.
All these were done in order to expiate sin after having fought 108 battles. Another instance may be cited here. When the king Viraballāla was searching for a suitable locality in the forest to build an Agrahāra, the servants of the king killed a tiger, which had many cubs in its womb. In order to atone for the sin, the king built an Agrahāra there, and also built a tank near Hoisanahalli and called that village Sōganī. He also built temples there and one of them was Bhīmēśvara.69

We may also cite here an interesting example from a Chōla country. This record narrates the story of a brahmana, who died of broken heart when a Chōla king forcibly seized the philosopher’s stone which was in the brahmana’s possession, and to expiate the sin he thus committed, the king is said to have built temples in holy places all over the Vengi country, and also at Turuvekere. Later, Sōvana dandanāyaka made Turuvekere an Agrahāra and granted it to the brahmanas.70

Sometimes, with no set motives, but simply as an act of Dharma, Agrahāras were created. To give an example, one Rayana dandanatha, is said to have granted Morale as an Agrahāra and distributed it among the brahmanas. The motive behind the grant was Dharma.71 Another instance is of the creation of an Agrahāra Sōmanāthapura through
the devotion to Dharma by the general Soma is mentioned in a record of 1268 A.D. Yet another reason for creating the Agrahāras was to facilitate regular services for the deity in the temple of a particular place. We find records registering grants of Agrahāras for such purposes.

In 1112 A.D. the Chalukya king Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya VI, created the Hittala Agrahāra for the service of god Somesvara. For the daily services and repairs of the temples Viranarayana and Achyutēvāra, the village Mūdigere was made an Agrahāra and was granted to the brāhmaṇas by the king Viraballāla in 1186 A.D. For the service of the god Gogēvāra an Agrahāra is said to have been created by the king Somesvaradeva in 1240 A.D. These Agrahāras were granted to brāhmaṇas who fulfilled the purposes for which these grants were made such as repairing the temples, offering regular worship to the deity etc.

**Donors of Agrahāras**

**Kings:** When we come to the question of persons instituting the Agrahāras and donating them, we naturally come to the question of ownership of land. It is because only those who own land can donate it. Now in ancient Karnataka, as in India, theoretically the ownership of land vested with the king. He was the sole master of
the land that he ruled over. Naturally he was rightly entitled to create Agrahāras and donate them whenever and wherever he liked within his dominions. We have seen above that, on occasions like conquest, coronation or for educational or religious purposes, he made grants of Agrahāras.

In this connection we may incidentally mention that there has been some difference of opinion about the ownership of land in ancient India. Some scholars like Dr. Sircar hold the opinion that theoretically all land in ancient India belonged to the State although some land was attached to the king as his personal jagir. On the other hand, Prof. Sharma holds the opinion that land in ancient India was more or less the property of the king and that there is no evidence to show that the whole land belonged to the State. Thus the question is mostly one of distinction between the State land and the Crown land. But, it is difficult to make such clear cut distinction.

The king's position as the supreme lord of the kingdom did not, however, deprive the others of the right of ownership of land. The queens and state officials like the generals and other private individuals could own
personal property and hold a right over the land. They could also dispose it off in any way they liked, with, of course, the permission of the king. This view is suggested by the fact that in many cases when the king or other officials thought of donating a piece of land, they used to purchase it from the actual owner and then donate it.

Queens: One or two examples of the creation of Agrahāras by the queens may be mentioned here. A Chalukya record dated 1120 A.D. of Tribhuvanamalla Vikramaditya VI, states that Vikramatīrtha was granted as an Agrahāra to the brāhmaṇas by the queen Malayamatidevi. Sovaladēvi, queen of the Hoysala king Narasimha, is said to have created in 1237 A.D., the Agrahāra Sōmanathapura, which is the modern Haranahalli in Arasikere taluk of Hassan district.

State Officials: State officers also granted such Agrahāras. Būchirāja, who has been described as a great minister of the Hoysala king Ballāla created an Agrahāra called Sōmanathapura and built a Kēśava temple there. This Sōmanathapura, which is also mentioned as Hiriya Sōmanathapura in the record, is the modern Hulleyanakere in Arasikere taluk. The record is dated 1237 A.D.
Ummachige Agrahāra which is modern Kotavumachige in Gadag taluk was created by the Dandanayaka Kesavayya, who was a general under the Chalukya king Vikramādiya V. The record is dated 1012 A.D. and it hails from the village Kotavumachige. It is known from a record dated 1060 A.D. that a gift of Piriyur Agrahāra was made to the brāhmaṇas of the place by Maneverggade, Dandanayaka Gundamayya, a servant of the king Somesvara I. Creation of an Agrahāra by an officer named Rāyana dandanātha who also installed the god Kesava there is revealed in a record dated 1130 A.D. The record is from the village Marale in Chikkamagalur district. Virayya dandanāyaka, an officer under Viraballāła created the Agrahāra Viraballālapura, which he distributed to the 32 brāhmaṇas of the place. The record stating this fact is dated 1136 A.D.

In the above instances we have seen that besides the king, other persons also created Agrahāras. Now we have to consider the question of their right to make such grants or such villages and how they were empowered to do this. Although it is rather difficult to be very precise in deciding this question some interesting facts may be noted in this connection. A number of queens administered provinces or territorial divisions in ancient
days. When they created and granted Agrahāras as
governors of provinces, it was in their official capacity
that they were doing so. But, it was not always in their
official capacities that these queens made such grants.
Often, they viz., the queens and State officers owned
certain villages or small territorial units, the income
of which was to be enjoyed by them. These were in the
nature of personal estates or fiefs. They made grants
of Agrahāras from such fiefs in their personal capacity
and not in their official capacity.

In some cases, the queens or officials who
were neither governing any territory nor owned any
personal fiefs, were yet in a position to make such
grants. They were able to do so by requesting the king
to grant them some village, after receipt of which they
converted them into Agrahāras and donated them to the
people. For example, in a record noted above, Kamalādevi,
queen of Sivachitta permmanidēva of the Kadamba family
requested the king to grant the village Degāuve, which
she converted into an Agrahāra and granted it to the
brāhmaṇas who have been mentioned as brāhmaṇas of great
dignity, acquainted with all the Vedas, Vedāṅga, Nyāya,
Mīmāṃsa, Saṅkhya, Yoga, Vedānta, Smṛiti, Itiḥāsa, Purāṇa
etc. 84
Permission of the king for the donation of the Agraharas

Was it necessary to obtain the permission from the king for creating such Agrahāras, is a point to be considered. Perhaps it was necessary for them to obtain permission of the ruler at the time of making such grants. There are instances where such permission was taken by the donors. For instance, Suggaladēvi, the queen of Chālukya Āhavamalla, granted Agrahāra Miḍuṇḍi with the permission of the king Āhavamallādeva. The inscription is from Miḍuṇḍi and it is dated 1076 A.D. Kotavumachige mentioned above, was created and granted as an Agrahāra to Maunarājirdharabhātta, by the Dāndanāyaka Kesāvayya only after obtaining permission of the king Viktramāditya V. Brahmasamudra was established by the minister Nāka, after obtaining the permission of the Hoysala king Narasimha. A general named Chaudisetṭi granted the Agrahāra Kukkanūr to the brāhmaṇas, only after obtaining the consent of his overlord Sēma Kannara.

It may be noted in this connection that the inscriptions do not always explicitly state that the permission of the king was sought for. It need not, on that ground, be inferred, that permission was not taken in such cases or that it was not necessary. It appears
that permission in such cases was implicit; but, with the feudal rulers holding sway over certain provinces, such permission was perhaps not necessary. These feudal families owed their allegiance to the ruling king, but, in their own territory they were their own masters.

**Different nomenclatures of Agrahāras:**

In this way, for a variety of reasons, Agrahāharas were formed and donated by various persons to the brāhmaṇas and the donees became the owners of the donated property. Many a time they were not obliged to follow the usual rules of government, such as payment of taxes etc. Such Agrahāras which were exempted from payment of taxes or other imposts were known as Sarvanamasyad-Agrahāras. A few of them can be mentioned here in this connection. Agrahāra Mallaghāna i.e. the present Malghan in Sindgi taluk of Bijapur district was a Sarvanamasyad Agrahāra. Kalākerī in Sindgi taluk of Bijapur district, Hiriyakurihatti in Navalgund taluk of Dharwar district, Kūdala Kappadi Sangama i.e. the present Sangam in Hungund taluk of Bijapur district, Kondguli in Sindgi taluk of Bijapur district and Kummatage i.e. the modern Kumāṭgi in Bijapur district are some of the Sarvanamasyad Agrahāras of the ancient times.
These Agrahāras are distinct from another type of Agrahāras known as Niyatakara Agrahāras. Niyatakara Agrahāra was an Agrahāra, the donee-residents of which were to pay a stipulated amount of taxes to the government collectively.

A Śeuna record of Kannaradēva illustrates this point. It is dated 1253 A.D. The passage of the record runs thus:

"dēśa-parivartana-yōgyaiḥ-chatus'-sata-samkhya-pārimitaiah nishkair-niyata-karam-agrāhāram kṛita" 95

There are other terminologies by which the Agrahāras were described. They are Mahāgrahāra, Piriya-Agrahāra, Anādi Agrahāra, Paramēśvaradattī Agrahāra, Uttanad-Agrahāra, Agradaṇḍam-Agrahāra etc.

Mahā agrahāra: In the literal sense it means a great Agrahāra. It may be great in two respects. It is great in the sense that in extent it was large as could be inferred from the large number of Mahājanae, who represented the Agrahāras. It could be considered great because of its importance or perhaps the term Mahā is used in the sense of great in general. The following examples may be noted here.
Ron in Dharwar district was a Mahāgrahāra. Mahāgrahāra Dronāpura is referred to in a record dated 1080 A.D. from Doni in Dharwar district, Sindgi in Bijapur district, Maladalurū in Dharwar district have been mentioned as Mahāgrahāras. Kuritakōti in Gadag taluk of Dharwar district was a Mahāgrahāra. A western Chalukya record of Tribhuvanamalla from Sulekpeth in Chincholi taluk of Gulbarga district give reference to a Mahāgrahāra Sulya grāma. Mahāgrahāra Telseng has been mentioned in a record of 1147 A.D. The village Hombal in Gadag taluk of Dharwar district has been mentioned as a Mahāgrahāra Hombal in a record dated 1189 A.D. of Somesvara IV.

Thus, we can cite a number of examples to the Mahāgrahāras of ancient days.

Piriya Agrahāra: Perhaps Piriya Agrahāra also meant a great Agrahāra in general. To give one or two examples here — Agrahāra Kheda i.e. the present Agarkhed in Indi taluk of Bijapur district was called a Piriya Agrahāra. In a record of later date we find the Agrahāra Kheda mentioned as Piriya Agrahāra.

Anādi Agrahāra: Many Agrahāras have been
mentioned as Anādi Agrahāras. Anādi means that which has no beginning. A few examples can be given here: Aneyarūvige i.e. the present village Rugi in Bijapur district, Haveri in Dharwar district, Midagūndi in Dharwar district, Tilivalli in Hanagal taluk of Dharwar district and Ponnavattī i.e. the present Honnatti in Ranebennur taluk of Dharwar district were some, who have been mentioned as Anādi Agrahāras. As mentioned above, the term Anādi means without beginning. This term was used figuratively, to ascribe great antiquity to the Agrahāra without any particular significance.

**Paramēśvaradatti Agrahāra:** The purpose of calling an Agrahāra as Paramēśvaradatti Agrahāra was almost similar to the purpose of calling one as Anādi Agrahāra. The only difference being that, here the donation of the Agrahāra is ascribed to god or Paramēśvara in the latter case. Midagūndi Agrahāra, granted to Suggaladevi by the king Somēśvara II, as a Paramēśvaradatti Agrahāra is mentioned in a record of 1076 A.D. from Midagūndi in Ron Taluk of Dharwar district. Narpoḷe i.e. Navalli in Navalgund taluk of Dharwar district was a Paramēśvaradatti Agrahāra. The motive of associating the god with the grant was to ascribe antiquity on the one hand and holiness on the other.
Uttamad Agrahārā: Uttama means excellent. It is also called on account of high rank it occupied among the Agrahāras. It might as well have been considered superior to other Agrahāras. To give an example, the Agrahāra Muttage\textsuperscript{114} was called Uttamad Agrahāra. Such a description is only a formal one. Agrahāras like Bagavādi,\textsuperscript{115} in Bijapur district, Yelapura\textsuperscript{116} in Bijapur district and also Badgi\textsuperscript{117} in Bijapur district have been called Uttamad Agrahāras.

It may however be noted that these terms like Mahā, Piriya, Anādi, Paramēśvaradatti etc. prefixed to Agrahāras were only a general description of the Agrahāras without connoting any special meaning.

Naming of the Agrahāra:

When the Agrahāras were newly created, obviously they had to be given some name. They were generally named after the donors or the deities or other mythical personalities. For example, the Agrahāra Ballālapura was named after the king Viraballāla of the Hōysala dynasty.\textsuperscript{118} In a record dated 1194 A.D. mention is made of the general Madhūha, who created Madhusudhanapura in his own name.\textsuperscript{119} It has been referred to in an inscription dated 929 A.D. of Rāshtrakūta Gōvinda IV,
that the present village Kalas in Bankapur taluk of Dharwar district was called Ereyana Kadiyur. It is said that the village Kadiyur was so named after a person called Ereyana.120

Many times the Agraharas were named after the deities. For example, a western Chalukya record of Jagadekamalla II refers to Daivada-Posavuru or Deviya-Hosavuru which was named after the goddess Malachidévi of Hosavuru.121 This is the present Devihosur in Haveri taluk of Dharwar district. The village Kolatür i.e. the present Channarayapattana in Hassan district was called Amritapura Agrahara, named after the deity Amritesvara of the place.122 Another Hoysala record of Narasimha I states that Hulleyanakere was called Somanathapura at that time.123

We also find Agraharas named after the tanks that existed therein. For example, the present Sante-kershalli was known in a record dated 1141 A.D. as Harijaladhi or Vishnusamudra.124 This was obviously the name of a tank in that village. Similarly, we have Brahmasamudra also in Kadur taluk, which too appears to have got the name from the tank situated there.125

Another feature of naming the Agrahara was that
the original names of the villages were changed when they were converted into Agrahāras. For example, in the instances quoted above we see that the villages Nuggihalli and Hulleyanakere were given the names Somanathapura after they were converted into Agrahāras.

To mention another instance, Kembala was given the name Vīra Narasimhapura after it became an Agrahāra.

It is interesting to note that some Agrahāaras bore the names of Epic, Puranic or Mythical personalities like Rāma, Janamējaya, Harischandra and so on. These Agrahāaras are described as Rāmaradatti Agrahāra, Janamējayadatti Agrahāra, Harischandradatti Agrahāra, Asamandasadatti Agrahāra, etc. These names indicate that these Agrahāaras were donated by persons like Rāma, Janamējaya, Harischandra and the like. For instance, Lokklgunḍi, i.e., modern Lakkundi in Gadag taluk in Dharwar district is said to have been donated by Śrī Rāma. Elavatti, i.e., modern Yalavatti in Shirhatti taluk in Dharwar district is also said to have been donated by the lord Rāma. Gadagu the present Gadag in Dharwar district is mentioned as granted by Janamējaya at the time of his performing the Sarpayāga, that was performed by him. In the same way the Agrahāaras like Maladalur, Kuppagadde, and Bagewadi are also said to have been created in
Janamejaya. Similar is the case with Agrahāra Bagali in Harapanahalli taluk of Bellary district. It is named after the epic king Harischandra.\(^{132}\) Ikshugrama or Vēnugrama i.e., the present Belgaum is likewise associated with the king Ikṣvāku. The record narrates that Ikshugrama was an Agrahāra and it was granted to sixteen officiating priests (\textit{ritvik-gana}) as dakshinā at the time of performance of \textit{Aṣvamedha} sacrifice by the king Ikṣvāku.\(^{133}\) Gautama Agrahāra, was named after a saint Gautama.\(^{134}\) This Agrahāra is the present Gauj in Shimoga district. The Agrahāra Haverī is also described to have been a donation of the king Nāla.\(^{135}\) Obviously, these names were given to them with a desire on the part of the donors to associate the places with mythological heroes and historical personages who were, however, not really responsible for the creation of those Agrahāras. Ascribing antiquity, greatness and holiness was also obviously one of the motives behind giving such names to the Agrahāras.

We may notice here a remark made by Dr. M. Chidanandamurti regarding giving such names to the Agrahāras. According to him, the Agrahāras came to be called Anādi or they were associated with persons like Rāma, Janamejaya etc. when the name of the real donor was forgotten. (\textit{A cultural Study of Kannada Inscriptions, p.210}).
But this contention is not correct because we came across instances where such names were given even at the time of creating an Agrahāra. For example, an inscription from Haranahalli refers to the creation of an Agrahāra Somanāthapura and at the same time it calls it as Anādi Agrahāra. 136

In Tamilnad the Agrahāras were known as Chaturvedimangalam. We have ample Tamil records of Chōla country which mention these Chaturvedimangalamās. We know that some parts of Southern Karnataka, specially some regions in the Kolar, Bangalore, Mysore and Tumkur districts were in the Chōla kingdom in its heyday. Tamil records found in these regions pertaining to these regions pertaining to these periods referred to Agrahāras as Chaturvedimangalamās. For example — A record dated 1124 A.D. from Kabbur village in Davangere taluk of Chitradurga district calls the village Kabbur as Virarajendrachaturvedimangalam. 137 Another record dated 1167 A.D. mentions Kēralāntaka Chaturvedimangalam. 138 Chōlendra-simha Chaturvedimangalam is mentioned in a record of 1244 A.D. from Ambale in Yelandur taluk of Mysore district. 139
In another Chōla record from Hanganūr in Channarayapattana taluk, figures as Trailokyamahadevi Chaturvedimangalām after one of the queens of Rājaraṇa I. 140

Residents of the Agrahāra:

Now let us consider the question of the residents of the Agrahāras. It is made clear that the Agrahāras were the villages granted to the brāhmaṇas but it does not mean that only brāhmaṇas lived in such villages. A number of other people following different professions also lived in such villages. It is also interesting to note that the government exercised its control over such Agrahāras through their officials like gaṇindas, urodevas etc. and in matters of the administration of the Agrahāra the mahājana worked in close collaboration with them. Since the Agrahāras were donated to the brāhmaṇas all the land in such villages belonged to the brāhmaṇas. But, obviously, they could not by themselves cultivate the lands which they received. [They were essentially men of learning and by profession they were teachers or were employed in the temples for services like worship of god etc. Naturally the lands they received were rented out, the brāhmaṇas receiving only a part of the produce as stipulated. | People engaged in various professions also lived in Agrahāras to cater
As mentioned earlier, there were agriculturists in the Agrahāras. An inscription from Yali-sirur in Gadag taluk of Dharwar district refers to thirty okkalu of the place.\textsuperscript{141} Mention has been made to fifty okkalu of Arekurihaṭṭi in a record from Hiriya Kurihaṭṭi in Navalgund taluk of Dharwar district.\textsuperscript{142} A record dated 1189 A.D. of Somesvara IV mentions sixty agriculturists of the place. The record is from Hombal in Gadag taluk of Dharwar district.\textsuperscript{143} Hannavanigaru, were probably persons who dealt with trade in gold. The term used in inscriptions is Hannavanigar, perhaps this word is derived from honnu i.e. gold, and vanigar means traders. Hence we may surmise that these were traders who dealt with gold.

There were others like merchants (nakharas) and settlers engaged in various trades.\textsuperscript{144} Telligas (oil merchants), akkasali (gold smith), badari (carpenter), agasa (washerman), nāvida (barber), kuvalāra (potter), talari (village official), ugura (who betel leaves) and the like lived in the Agrahāras. Inscriptions refer to the maintenance of dancing girls also in the Agrahāras, obviously for service in the temples.
We may cite below a few examples. Seṭṭis and Telligas of Dambal Agrahāra have been mentioned in a record from Dambal in Dharwar district. A record dated 1099 A.D. from Soratūr mentions fifty Telliga families of that place.

The inscription from Dōni mentions the 500 Nakaras of that place. It is known from a record dated 1146 A.D. that 500 Nakaras existed in Ammayanabhāvi Agrahāra. That the Nāvida was expected to remove the nails of the 30 brahmaṇas every Monday is mentioned in a record from Shikarpur in Shimoga district. Another reference to a Nāvida named Dōra, who has been described as a trusted servant of the Mahājanas of Kurtakōti Agrahāra is found in an inscription from Kurtakōti itself. It is interesting to note here that he constructed a temple for the god Dāsēśvara. The service of baḍagi i.e. carpenter was also obviously required in the Agrahāras. To give an example here, an inscription of Rayamurāri Sōvidēva dated 1174 A.D. refers to a baḍagi named Bāmūja, son of Ballōja of Nareyaṅgal Agrahāra. The services of a goldsmith were no less important. In a record dated 1103 A.D. from Sūdi in Rōṇ taluk in Dharwar district, goldsmith Uttavoja has been mentioned as the king's goldsmith.
Similarly, we find references to Kammāra (blacksmith) and other professionals living in Agrahāras, in numerous inscriptions. Kammāra Bammōja has been mentioned in an inscription found at Nāgavi.\textsuperscript{153} A record dated 1150 A.D. from Sorab taluk mentions a blacksmith, who fought on behalf of his place and gained the world of gods.\textsuperscript{154} Reference has been made to a Kambāra (potter) in an inscription from Sorab taluk of Shimoga district.\textsuperscript{155}

Likewise we get references to Kanchagararu, (braziers) and Akkaśali and also Malagāra (a flower-seller) in a record from Hattimattūr.\textsuperscript{156}

Reference has been made to Hūvādigaru (flower sellers) in an inscription from Amminabhāvi in Dharwar district.\textsuperscript{157} The Kurtakōti record dated 1126 A.D. gives reference to a bangle-seller.\textsuperscript{158} A Jeweller (Manigāra) named Mādisēṭṭi has been referred to in a record dated 1075 A.D. of Sōmeśvara II, of Sūḍī in Ron taluk of Dharwar district.\textsuperscript{159}

We also find references in the inscriptions to fishermen as living in Agrahāras. For example, a fisherman named Bāchayya is mentioned in a record from Shikarpur.\textsuperscript{160} It is mentioned in the record that Bāchayya fought against the raiders and died in the fight at the instance of the
1000 Mahajanas of the immemorial Agrahara Jamburu.

An inscription from Sorab taluk indicates the tax on hunting, fishing and loom tax. Bedars are found in a record from Tarikere in Kadur district. Reference has been made to a 'Kalkutiga gari' (stone cutters' street) in a record of 1082 A.D.

It is interesting to note in this connection that persons belonging to different religious sects like Jainas, Buddhists lived in the Agraharas. There are references in the inscriptions, to Jaina teachers and the Jaina Basadis in the Agraharas. One such Basadi was situated in Doni Agrahara. A person named Gunanidhi Kesava is said to have made grant of money for the worship of the deity in the Basadi (Jaina temple) of Balleya Jemmayya of Lokkigundi Agrahara. Grants made for the worship of the deity Santinatha in Kammata Jinalaya is referred to in a record of Somesvara IV from Lakkundi in Dharwar district.

Similarly, a Buddhist Vihara was in existence in an Agrahara, by name Dambal as is known from a record of 1098 A.D. It was built by one Surigeysetti of that place.
Indeed, it is difficult to say definitely the position of such residents in relation to the Mahājana, who were the donees of such villages. It is also difficult to know to whom such people gave their taxes levied on their professions, whether to the Mahājanas or to the government. We shall discuss this question in the sequel.

Though there were officials like gāṇḍas and āvodeyas in the Agrahāras, the internal administration appears to have been the responsibility mainly of the Mahājanas, i.e., the donees of such Agrahāras. Obviously there was close cooperation between the government officials and the Mahājanas of the place.
References and Notes

2. EI., XXIV, p. 127.
3. Ibid., XXIII, p. 52 ff.
4. Economic conditions in South India, p. 158 (n.298)
5. Select Inscriptions, p. 404 (n.5)
7. It may incidentally be noted that Shri. S.B. Joshi, a well known research scholar of Karnataka, offers quite a different interpretation. According to him, the word hāra comes from Kannada root word padu - pada - pāra ..... hāra, hāre etc. But there is no sound basis for such a derivation. It is difficult to agree that the word hāra is derived from a purely indigenous Kannada root padu and such a stand cannot be supported linguistically.
   (Edgalu helide Kannada Kathe, p. 42)
10. IA., VII, p. 279 (n)
Pahien, who visited India in 399 A.D. gives an account of the period. He says that the brahmans at that period were very few in number. These, according to him, pleased the rulers by their learning in the Vedas, calculation of stars, foretelling of the events etc., for which they received grants from the rulers.

Ahichchatra was a centre of learning. It is at present near the village of Rammager in Bereilly district of Uttar Pradesh. It was a capital of Northern Panchalas of ancient times. Its people have been mentioned as honest and diligent in learning. It is said that there were more than 10 Buddhist monasteries and nine temples with about 1,000 monks and 300 worshippers of Isvara deva etc.
21. EC., V, On. 211.
22. Ibid., Ak. 172.

/sriman - meha - Pradhanam sarvadhekari
/srikarana - hegade - Buchi - Rajam Saka-varsha
savirad-embhatta - nalkanya Chitrabhanu - sam-
vatsarad - uttarayana-samkramaanadantu Niraguana-
nada Hulleyakereyam tanna alada Narasimha-devana
keyyalu hadada 'sri-Somanathapurav-endu hesaritu
sarvva-badha-pariharav-oppant-agraharam adi
chatur-vveda-paragarappa brahmaargge dharav-
purvakam adi sarvva-namsayavagi bittu kottharu

23. Ibid., VI, Tk. 20.
24. Ibid., V, On. 203.
25. MAR., 1933, p. 20.
26. EC., VI, Kd. 49.

a Kaluvva-sayannanavaru - mariyadeyalu
a Bapavuravanu - Yudubhava - sarbbajna
Lakshmi purav-endu hesar ittu agraharavamu adi
yambhatta-feradu Vrittiyagi adi devuralige
8 Vrittiya kaladu mikka 74 Vrittigalanu nana gotrar-sa brahmanottamarige dharapurbbakam maagi Kottaru ..... 

27. Ibid., XI, od. 50.

/srimat - pandayjam ..... atanu kaatidsa

kereya kelage nalkumatter keyyu biuvudokke

Biravuramun Bidirvvaliyum ulndo -

agraharam maagi alliya ... rvvaru etc.

28. Ibid., VII, Sk. 179.

29. BI., VI, p. 254.

30. KI., I, p. 59.

31. EC., XII. Ch. 2.

32. Ibid., IV, Ch. 44.

maa - alva Sivabala - Nayanarige Tori -

maagalu Hadinaada Homma Alurahalli Hirivura

chatubsime - sahitam Sri - Vira - Ballala

devaru .... Nayanarige Arasu - ganda Ram -

Chaturvedimangalada ...... agraharavagi

dharyan-erudu/sasadaa etc.

Uttarayana - sankramānad-andu āridavalkeya

Tāgravādiyam manneya – Būvanahalli olagāda
halligalu sahita Dharmapurav-emb-i-hesarām
mādi alliya sri Keśava devar – anga – bhoga
nivedya .. etc.

Also see EO., IV, Hn. 137.

38. Ibid., No. 2
39. Ibid., 40-41, App. A. No. 23
Also see JBBRAS., XII, p. 352 ff.
40. EI., XII, p. 154 (l. 69-73).
41. EC., VI, Tk. 20.
42. Ibid., V, Bl. 175

/Sriman – maha – pradhanām sarvadhikāri –
srikaranāraganyam sarvadhikshan enisida

Virayya – daṇḍanāyakam tanna nija – svāmī
‟sri – Vira Ballāla devara rajyābhudyarthartha-
vāgi tāne karuṣitta kaṣa kaśīdu madīda/sri.

Viraballāla puradoṇu Jadra samudra Gaṅgasamudra,
Achyutasamudra Virasamudra-vamba keregala
kaṭṭisy-a purakke gadyaṇam nākara modala
mādi ga 4 a - puramaṁ sarvaṃasaṃvaśi koṭṭu

..........

43. Ibid., Cn. 236.
44. MAR., 1932, p. 16.
45. Also see EC., XI, Tn. 97 (supplement).
46. EC., V, Ak. 118.
47. A.P.Govt. Ar. S., IX, p. 32.

/Sriman maha pradhanaṃ senapati kaṭita-
vyagagā kannada sandhi vigra[h]a dananayakaṃ
Bammapaṣiyamal gosaraṃ prithiṇaṃ sapta
dagaṇa-viṇīt i - mūraṃ danam gama mādi
/sri magajagadekamaladevara pāda-vaneyeṇa mādi
tan - mūhurtadolf šrimadagraharavāmmayanesabāviyām
punarbharanaṃ mādi - alliya svayambe etc. }

/A.P. Govt. Ar. S., IX, p. 32.

/Sri Virapratapa Harihara-mahārāyaṇa anadi
agraharavada Kukanūra-graṇaḍa prabhutvakke salluva
tōṣṣāvamyaṃ-entendere Kukanūra agraḥaravu
khilavagāḥodalli jīrnoddharavāṃ mādi Kukanūra
Sri Mahamaya Anga - Ranga-bhogak - Endu Devalayagala

Jirnpodharakke Mahanaivedya Nandadipa Chaitra

Pavitra Parvva Tithigalu Modalada Nitya Naimittika

Chaturv vedas-Adhyayana-sthapanagam Samarpisida

Kukanura Gramakke Salluva .......


49. EC., VII, Sk. 175.

50. The following subhashita is well known:

Annadanat paramdnam

Vidyadnam - atah param.

51. EC., V, Kd. 52.

52. Ibid., Ar. 118

Adhipana rajyonnati sakala dharmadabhyu

dayavagraharam vaamsakadhikotsavam ene

MadhamadhusudhanapuranaMalkari

Nirmisidam

53. EC., V, Cn. 152.

... Nayakera nijasvami Sri Vira-Ballala Devar-

Ayurargaiyavaryabhivridhyarthvagi Kabbuku nada

Amritanathapuravada Kolatura Agraharam maqi

Alliya MulasthanaDe Sri Ramesvaradavargge Nitya

Naiyvedya Nandajivigege ...
54. Inscriptions from Madras Presidency, I, No. 182.
55. Ibid.,
56. SII., XV, No. 49 (1154 A.D.)
57. HAS., XVIII, p. 62.
59. EI., V, p. 16 (1.16)

Param-āśīrūvada - parampare niṣa-rajy-ābhivri-
dhīg-udbhavan-enip - Īśvara ghalisāsamge jagad-
guruge hārīt-abja-ravige dhārapūrvva y Ratta gha
ratta vesar-ddharege - itṭalav-ene rājya patta-bandh-
ōtsavādol-kottam Manimgavalliyane oṭṭajikege
kalasav-īduvaterādīm Talla

60. MAR., 1930, p. 5.
61. JBBRAS., p. 274 ff.
62. EC., V, Hn, 102.

śōbhakrit - saṃvatsarada Pushya-māsada
Uttaṛāyana sankrāntiyandu Kāveri-deviya taḍiyal-
irddu 'sri-Vishṇuwardhana - Hoysala+ deva
Nīṛggunda - nāḍ olagaṇa Kellavattiyalu svarggasthan-
adode atange paroksha vinayam-agi atana

asrita brahmanarage agrahara sarvva -

namasyav-agi sva-hastadim dharapurvakam

madi kottar.

64. ARIE., 58-9 App. B. No. 661.
65. EI., XV, p. 28 (1.8-9)

a Vishnubhatta vibhuge maha - vibhavam

Vikram—amkan upanayanadela urrvi - vinutam

Satyasraya-devam Murtageyan-osedu dakshine-
gotta: ....

67. EC., XII, p. 50.
69. QJMS., XIII, p. 755.

The date of the record is not known.

This event has been mentioned by R. Shamashastry in his article on Keladi Chiefs.

70. MAR., 1916, p. 3.
71. EC., VI, Ch. 137 (1130 A.D.)

Also see MAR., 1927, p. 123.
72. EC., XI, D9. 36
73. MAR., 1927, p. 133.
74. EC., V, Bl. 175.
75. Ibid., XI, Hk. 121.
77. ARIE., 1959-60, App. No. 480.
78. EC., V, Ak. 123.
79. Ibid., Ak. 172.
80. EI., XX, p. 64.
81. MAR., 1928, p. 69 (No. 68).
82. EC., VI, Cn. 137.
83. Ibid., Tk. 45 (l. 103)
84. JBBRAS., XI, p. 275.
85. K.G. Kundangar: *Inscriptions in North Kanatak State and Kolhapur district*, p. 73.
86. EI., XX, p. 67, l. 12-15, (1012 A.D.)
87. EC., VI, Kd. 52.
88. JBBRAS., XII, p. 42 ff.
89. SII., XX, No. 64 (1100 A.D.)
90. Ibid., No. 75 (1117 A.D.)
91. SII., XV, No. 49 (1154 A.D.)
92. Ibid., No. 88 (1160 A.D.)
93. SII., XX, No. 143 (1166 A.D.)
94. Ibid., No. 12a (1187 A.D.)
95. JBBRAS., XII, p. 44.
96. BKI., I, No. 59 (1022 A.D.)
97. Ibid., II, No. 126.
98. SII., XX, No. 72 (1111 A.D.)
99. BKI., II, No. 173 (1124 A.D.)
100. Ibid., No. 200 (1126 A.D.)
102. KI., II, p. 82.
103. SII., XV, No. 73.
104. Ibid., XX, No. 215.
105. Ibid., No. 230.
107. SII., XX, No. 166 (1176 A.D.)
109. SII., XV, No. 189 (1244 A.D.)
110. KI., II, p. 78.
111. ARSIE., 33-4, App. No. 39.
112. BKI., I, No. 117.
113. Ibid., II, p. 171.
114. Ibid., No. 141.
115. SII., XV, No. 113.
116. SII., XV, No. 151.
117. Ibid., No. 177.
118. EC., V, Ak. 68 (1164. A.D.)
119. Ibid., Ak. 118.
120. EL., XIII, p. 335.
121. ARSIE., 1932-33. ApP No. 34.
122. MAR., 1939, p. 78.
123. Ibid., 1933, p. 67.
124. EC., VI, Kd. 96 (p. 17).
125. Ibid., Kd. 53.
126. BKI., I, No. 52.
Also see KI., II, p. 26. "Sri Ramaradattinya
Agraharam Lokkigundi..."
128. K.L.E. Society's College of Arts and
p. 20 ff.
129. BKI., II No. 173.
130. EC., VIII, Sb. 183.
131. SII., XV, No. 219.
132. SII., XVII, No. 92-93.
133. IX., II, p. 132 ff.
134. IA., VIII, p. 95.
136. EC., V, Ak. 123.
137. Ibid., XI, D9. 155.
138. Ibid., IV, Ch. 98.
The agriculturists are generally mentioned as *okkalu* in the records. But the word *okkalu* has a wider meaning. But here the agriculturists are mentioned as *avasayigalenisida aruvattokkalu*.

Sometimes we come across the term *Nakhara* or *Nagara-Mahājana*. In such cases we have to take the two terms *Nakhara* or *Nagara* and *Mahājana*.

**References:**

139. Ibid., IV, Yl. 6.
140. MAR., 1905', Cu. 1295.
141. BKI., I, No. 50.
142. SII., XV, No. 49 (1154 A.D.)
143. Ibid., No. 73.
144. BKI., I, No. 94. (*telligarai-vattokkalu*).
145. Ibid., II, No. 137.
146. Ibid., No. 158.
147. SII., XV, No. 31.
148. EC., VII, Sk. 185.
149. BKI., II, No. 133.
150. SII., XV, No. 128.
151. BKI., II, No. 153.
152. SII., XV, No. 162.
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<td>155</td>
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